



**TESTIMONY OF  
LAWRENCE + MEMORIAL HOSPITAL  
NEW LONDON, CT  
SUBMITTED TO THE  
PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE  
Wednesday, March 5, 2014**

**HB 5384, An Act Concerning Reports Of Nurse Staffing Levels**

Lawrence + Memorial Hospital appreciates the opportunity to submit testimony concerning HB 5384, An Act Concerning Reports of Nurse Staffing Levels.

Good morning. My name is Lauren Williams, RN, and I am the Chief Nursing Officer and Vice President for Patient Care Services at Lawrence + Memorial Hospital in New London. I am testifying in opposition to this bill.

At a time when hospitals throughout Connecticut are focused on continued provision of quality patient care, HB 5384 would create an unnecessary administrative burden on the hospitals and provide no meaningful benefit toward that end.

The proposed reporting would not reflect the very complex and diverse nature of staffing levels at various hospitals, nor would it provide any meaningful insight on, or benchmark for, improvement therefore adding no value for hospitals, staff or the patients and communities we serve.

Hospitals in our state are already working diligently and collaboratively to enhance cultures of safety in our effort to eliminate preventable harm. We are participating in the national Partnership for Patients program, which is focused on improving patient care in 10 key clinical areas. Adequate nursing staffing levels are critical to achieving that. And while we are doing our best to meet day-to-day challenges with shrinking resources, I can say with confidence that L+M will never compromise patient safety in the interest of cost.

The reporting method proposed in this bill would not take into account the site- and patient-specific considerations that go into day-to-day and hour-to-hour staffing levels. Each patient's age, medical history, condition, cognitive and functional abilities, procedures and other factors go into staffing-level decisions. Beyond that, there are staff-specific considerations that are factored in as well: licensure, education, skill, experience, tenure on a patient unit and experience with certain types of patients are all considered. There is far more involved in reporting on staffing levels than simply counting the number of patients and attending staff.

I urge you to oppose HB 5384 so that precious nursing resources in these challenging times can be better spent on crucial initiatives – some being developed, others already in place – that will continue to provide more meaningful assurances of quality patient care.

Lawrence + Memorial Hospital will support and participate in ongoing, cooperative work by the Connecticut Hospital Association in conjunction with various state agencies, healthcare providers and education institutions to ensure all of our patients consistently receive the best possible care.

Thank you for your attention and consideration.